

Head Start University Partnership Research Grants: Strategies for Developing Head Start Teacher Effectiveness, Research Partners

Arizona State University

Principal Investigator:

M. Adelaida Restrepo

Project Title:

Dialogic Reading, Inferencing, Vocabulary Enhancement, and Scaffolded Conversations (DRIVES): A Professional Development Model to Increase Oral Language for Academic Readiness in Preschool Children

Project Funding Years:

2008-2011

Project Abstract:

Arizona State University will implement a Dialogic Reading, Inferencing, Vocabulary Enhancement, and Scaffolded Conversations (DRIVES) professional development (PD) program which aims to increase high quality language and emergent literacy instruction in English and Spanish by providing PD to Head Start teachers, mentors, assistants, and specialists. The DRIVES PD program goal is to improve academic outcomes of children who are English Language Learners (ELL) in Head Start. Specifically, this program will target skills found to improve ELL children's reading, oral language, and decoding. This program will focus on increasing vocabulary, language comprehension, and complex language production through: (a) scaffolding conversations, (b) high-level questioning, (c) direct vocabulary and story retelling instruction, (d) repeated and dialogic reading, and (e) systematic use of English as a second language instructional strategy. During Year 1, the PD program will be developed. During year 2, 18 classrooms will be randomly assigned to intervention (immediate treatment) and control (delayed treatment) groups. During Year 3, the control group from cohort 1 will become the intervention group for cohort 2 and nine additional classrooms will be randomly assigned to the control group. In addition, in Year 3 DRIVES will be evaluated for sustainability. Results are expected to increase ELL children's outcomes in vocabulary development, inferencing skills, story telling, and language comprehension and production skills in English and Spanish. In addition, the DRIVES program will benefit

Head Start staff by providing high quality oral language instruction in the classroom.

Sample:

Year 1: 18 Head Start Classrooms

Year 2-3: 18 Head Start Classrooms

60 Head Start Teachers/Assistants/Staff Members

Measures:

Children

Assessment of Literacy and Language (ALL)

reschool Language Scale – Spanish version

Get Ready to Read

Spanish Phonological Awareness Measure

Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT)

Narrative Assessment Protocol

reschool Clinical Evaluation of Language Function

Expressive One-Word Picture Vocabulary Test (EOWPVT)

Expressive One-Word Picture Vocabulary Test-Spanish-Bilingual Edition (EOWPVT:SBE)

Teachers

Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS)

Teach Emergent Literacy and Language Skills (TELLS)

Teach Emergent Literacy and Language Skills – Bilingual Classroom (TELLS-BC)

The Research Foundation of SUNY on behalf of the University of Buffalo

Principal Investigator:

Gregory A. Fabiano, Ph.D.

Project Title:

Strategies for Improving the Effectiveness of Head Start Teachers' Classroom Management

Project Funding Years:

2008-2011

Project Abstract:

The Research Foundation of SUNY on behalf of the University of Buffalo will investigate the effectiveness of an intensive inservice training program designed for teachers and teacher assistants in Head Start classrooms. Teachers and teacher assistants will be randomly assigned to a one-day

inservice training or five-day intensive experiential training before the beginning of the Head Start school year. Additionally, all teachers will have the opportunity to work with advanced school psychology graduate students who will serve as behavioral consultants. Specific aims for this study are to (a) develop and implement an intensive summer experiential training program for Head Start teachers that increases the effectiveness of classroom management procedures; (b) investigate the impact of experiential learning with follow-up relative to inservice training with follow-up on improving the effectiveness of teachers' classroom management procedures; and (c) investigate the impact of training on the program-level variables such as number of students referred from each classroom due to behavioral concerns, teacher turn-over, and supervisor ratings of teacher performance. In Year 1, investigators will identify strengths and needs related to teacher effectiveness in classroom management, develop and pilot teacher training procedures, and create forms and measures to monitor the integrity of the pilot training procedures. In Year 2 17 Head Start centers will be randomly assigned to one of the two training conditions. Year 3 will include the five-day intensive training for teachers who were assigned to one-day inservice training and booster sessions for teachers assigned to intensive training in year two. In October, February, and June of Year 2 and 3 teacher effectiveness for the sites will be assessed. Results are expected to show teachers participating in the intensive experiential training program will demonstrate better classroom management skills, have a better classroom climate, and demonstrate improved use and outcomes related to inservice training. In addition, improved teacher effectiveness in classroom management strategies and child-related outcomes will be observed in classrooms where the teacher and teacher assistants participated in the experiential learning.

Sample:

17 Head Start Centers

Measures:

Teachers

Independent (blinded) Observations of teacher classroom management procedures and student behavior

Impairment Rating Scale (IRS)

Classroom

Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale, Revised Edition, Updated (ECERS)

Principal Investigator:
Susan Landry, Ph.D.

Project Title:
Strategies for Developing Head Start Teacher Effectiveness

Project Funding Years:
2008-2011

Project Abstract:
The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston will develop and implement a comprehensive professional development (PD) program for Migrant Head Start teachers to improve school readiness in English language learners (ELL). The goal of this project is to answer research questions related to teacher's behaviors and ELL student outcomes. Specifically, they will target questions related to teacher training, mentor support, virtual learning environments, and teacher behavior changes as a result of PD and student outcomes for ELL children. This project will be a collaborative effort between the Texas Migrant Counsel Early Education Training Lab and Migrant Head Start programs. Teachers assigned to the treatment group will participate in all professional development activities and the teachers assigned to the control group will continue with their normal teaching practices. Year 1 will involve development and piloting a web-based PD module of best practices for teaching preschool ELL children. In Years 2 and 3 of this project, teachers will be randomly assigned to the treatment or control condition. Research findings are expected to show PD will improve teaching practices by increasing the number of response opportunities for per student/per session, improving and increasing the use of scaffolding techniques, increasing the amount of critical feedback, and appropriate classroom pacing. Furthermore, this program should result in a comprehensive package that is reasonable to implement in schools with high proportions of ELL children.

Sample:
12 Migrant Head Start classrooms
60 Migrant Head Start Teachers
96 Migrant Head Start ELL Children

Measures:
Children
reschool Language Scale-IV (PLS-IV)
Expressive One-Word Picture Vocabulary Test (EOWPVT)
EOWPVT, Spanish-Bilingual Edition
reschool Comprehensive Test of Phonological Processing and Print Awareness (Pre-CTOPPP)

Teachers

CIRCLE-Phonological Awareness, Language, and Literacy System (C-PALLS)
Phonological Awareness Screener

Orelena Hawks Puckett Institute, Inc.

Principal Investigator:

Carol M. Trivette, Ph.D.

Project Title:

Professional Development Strategies for Promoting Head Start Teacher Effectiveness

Project Funding Period:

2008-2011

Project Abstract:

The Orelena Hawks Puckett Institute determined the efficacy of a professional development model where project staff used a research-based adult learning approach to promote Head Start teachers' understanding, adoption, and use of early childhood classroom practices likely to improve child outcomes. The approach, called *Participatory Adult Learning Strategy (PALS)*, involves learners' active participation in learning about, implementing, and evaluating the use of a practice. Participants were teachers and teacher assistants in Head Start classrooms assigned to a training group or control group. Teachers in the training groups were trained on two project components: (1) child learning opportunity characteristics practices, and (2) instructional practices. Classroom organization practices that support teachers' use of practices in each of the two training components also were a focus. In Year 1, the project developed assessment procedures in collaboration with other Head Start University Partners grantees, established measures of fidelity and implementation, and refined methods and measures. In Years 1 through 3 professional development activities were provided, and investigators evaluated teacher characteristics and professional development characteristics that influenced teachers' implementation of the targeted early childhood classroom practices. Preliminary findings indicated that neither the structural features of training (e.g., number of hours) nor teacher characteristics (i.e., age, experience, education) were related to the use of the targeted classroom practices. A high degree of professional development fidelity was associated with greater teacher and teacher assistant use of the targeted classroom practices. Greater teacher adoption of targeted classroom practices was associated with higher ratings of child competence and persistent play (CEQ), lower

ratings of child problem behavior (SSRS), and more positive language outcomes (PPVT_4).

Sample:

19 Head Start Classrooms (intervention), 19 Head Start classrooms (control)
42 Head Start teachers (intervention); 39 Head Start teachers (control)
148 Children
1 Mentor

Measures:

Children

Developmental Checklist (DC) of the Developmental Observation Checklist System
Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test, Fourth edition (PPVT-4)
Woodcock Johnson III (WJ-III), Letter-Word Identification Test subset
Social Skills Rating System (SSS), Social Skills Scale
Child Engagement Questionnaire (CEQ)

Teachers

Teacher Engagement in Adult Learning Process
Teacher Training Feedback Form
Teacher Practice Feedback Form
Teacher Feedback Form
Teacher Questionnaire
Ideas about Children Scale
Teacher Beliefs Scale
Teacher Efficacy Scale
Classroom Practices Observation Scales
Classroom Assessment Scoring System
Teaching Styles Rating Scale (TSRS)

George Mason University

Principal Investigator:

Julie Kidd, Ed.D.

Project Title:

Sustaining Teachers' Effective Pedagogy (STEP): Continuous Program Improvement to Increase Teacher Effectiveness and Enhance Children's Outcomes

Project Funding Period:

2008-2011

Project Abstract:

George Mason University will be designing, implementing, and evaluating the

Sustaining Teachers' Effective Pedagogy (STEP) model which will collaborate with the Head Start Professional Development Team (PDT) to identify effective teaching strategies which promotes and sustains teacher effectiveness and enhances student outcomes. Specifically, the STEP model will give Head Start teachers and teaching assistants the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to provide effective instruction that responds to the children's diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. The STEP model is comprised of a five-day STEP Institute, ongoing Community of Learning and Practice Groups, and online group and mentor interactions. In Year 1, STEP and the Head Start PDT will collaborate to design and develop the modules, materials, and resources needed for implementation. In Year 2, the project will be implemented in Alexandria Head Start classrooms with 17 teachers in STEP groups and 17 teachers in control groups. In Year 3, the project will be replicated among Northern Virginia Head Start sites with 30 teachers in STEP and 30 teachers in control groups. Results are expected to show STEP allows Head Start teachers to strengthen their practices and effective teaching strategies, increase teachers' abilities to identify intentional and culturally responsive teaching, and improve teachers' quality of teaching and sustaining positive child outcomes.

Sample:

Year 2: 17 Head Start Classrooms

Year 2: 34 Head Start Teachers/Teacher Assistants

Year 3: 30 Head Start Teachers/Teacher Assistants

Measures:

Children

Child Observation Record (COR) Assessment System

Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening – Pre-Kindergarten (PALS-PreK)

Teachers

Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS)

reschool Classroom Implementation Rating Instrument (PCI)

The Early Childhood Classroom Observation Measure (ECCOM)

STEP Practices Questionnaire

STEP Participant Attitude Questionnaire

University of Northern Iowa

Principal Investigator:

Betty Zan, Ph.D.

Project Title:

Coaching and Mentoring for Preschool Quality

Project Funding Period:
2008-2011

Project Abstract:

The University of Northern Iowa will implement a project that will improve the academic, social, and emotional outcomes of Head Start children by addressing effective teacher strategies and behaviors. Participants in this project will be teachers, assistant teachers, and supervisors from local Head Start programs. The intervention will target Head Start teachers, assistant teachers, and supervisors through peer coaching and implementing a mentoring model that will provide focused training for teachers that will lead to changes in teacher beliefs and practices and focused training for supervisors which will improve mentoring and supervising of teachers. The goals of this project are: (a) to increase the effectiveness of teachers in promoting the language, academic, social, and emotional development of children in their classrooms; (b) to increase the effectiveness of supervisors in mentoring and supervising teachers; and (c) to improve the educational and social outcomes of children. In Year 1, the project will develop intervention and supporting materials and conduct a small-scale intervention focusing on local Head Start teachers and supervisors. In Year 2, a follow-up workshop will be available to cohort 1 teachers and an additional set of teachers (cohort 2) will be introduced to the intervention. Year 3 will continue with follow-up workshops for cohort 1 and 2 teachers as well as training additional supervisors as mentors. The expected results of this project are to increase program quality throughout the field of early childhood education in Iowa, including Head Start and the public school system, and to increase partnership between the University of Northern Iowa and Head Start, increase effective supervision of teachers by Head Start management, and increase quality programming by Head Start teachers.

Sample:

Year 1: 10 Head Start Teachers, 5 Head Start Supervisors
Year 2: 40 Head Start Teachers, 15 Head Start Supervisors
Year 3: 108 Head Start Teachers, 54 Head Start Supervisors
Year 3: 18 Supervisor Mentors
Year 1-3: 2,142 Head Start Children

Measures:

Children

eabody Picture Vocabulary Test Revised (PPVT-R)
Work Sampling for Head Start (WSHS) Developmental Checklist
Devereaux Early Childhood Assessment (DECA)

Teachers

Ideas about Children

Classroom

Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS)

University of Pittsburgh/Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh of UPMC

Principal Investigator:

Stephen J. Bagnato, Ed.D., NCSP

Project Title:

Early Childhood Partnership's *Center On Mentoring for Effective Teaching (COMET)*: A University-Head Start Applied Research Collaborative in Appalachia

Project Funding Period:

2008-2011

Project Abstract:

The University of Pittsburgh and Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh of UPMC, in a collaborative effort with Head Start partners in the Appalachian region, will be implementing the Early Childhood Partnership's *Center On Mentoring for Effective Teaching (COMET; www.uclid.org)* model to conduct applied research on mentoring in order to promote effective Head Start teaching practices. Teachers assigned to the mentoring group (experimental) will receive an instructional module and on-site COMET mentoring training throughout the Head Start school year. Year 1 will consist of developing training content, strategies and measures, hiring project staff, and random selection of Head Start classrooms into mentoring (experimental) or control (no mentoring) groups. In Year 2 investigators will implement the COMET model by recording in-vivo classroom observations, conducting weekly individual mentoring sessions and monthly group mentoring sessions, and tracking progress observations of teaching practices to promote early school success skills in early literacy and social and self-regulatory behaviors in children. In Year 3 the COMET model will be implemented in the control groups. Analyses will include both E-C statistical analyses to document the efficacy of the COMET model and path analysis methods to identify specific professional development mentoring features that contribute to changes in both teacher and child behaviors. Results are expected to show the COMET model will mediate the development of desired instructional and management behaviors. In addition, it is expected that Head Start children taught by teachers who model desired instructional and management behaviors will have better early school success competencies (e.g., early

literacy and social/self-control behaviors) at kindergarten transition than children whose teachers do not demonstrate these behaviors.

Sample:

174 Head Start Teachers

118 Head Start Classrooms

1,763 Head Start Children

Measures:

Teachers and Mentoring

Inventory of Practices to Promote Social and Emotional Competence (IPPSC)

Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS)

Early Language and Literacy Classroom Observation (ELLCO)

SPECS Mentoring Monitor

Children

reschool and Kindergarten Behavior Scale (PKBS-2) and/or

Ages and Stages Questionnaire: Social Emotional (ASQ: SE)

Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) and/or

Basic School Skills Inventory (BSSI-3)